

**Schmidt Science Fellows, in partnership with the Rhodes Trust**

**Appointment of Program Director**

1. **Introduction**

**The Schmidt Science Fellows, in partnership with the Rhodes Trust**

The Schmidt Science Fellows program aims to expand the horizons of the next generation of leaders and innovators in the natural sciences, engineering, mathematics, and computing. It will enhance the ability of the world’s most promising new scientists to develop cutting-edge research, and equip them with the skills to serve as leaders in their fields and in society.

The goal is to give the world’s best aspiring scientific minds a broader perspective, the ability to engage in an interdisciplinary way, and the opportunity to make a lasting impact in society. Through a combination of group sessions at some of the world’s leading universities and a special postdoctoral study in a field different from their existing expertise, Fellows will be exposed to new topics, new ways of thinking, and new people that will help guide their future paths to success.

**The Vision:**

* Expand the horizons of aspiring scientists by introducing them to new fields, research cultures, technologies, and cutting-edge advances.
* Develop the skills and qualities Fellows will need to pursue innovative discoveries and serve as future leaders in their fields and in society.
* Build a collaborative spirit of fellowship that will guide the Fellows throughout their careers.

**Why now?**

We have entered a fundamentally new era of science and technology, one where a new generation of scientific leaders have the potential to change the world for the better. Scientific progress and cutting-edge technologies are rapidly accelerating our understanding of the natural and built worlds. Research is increasingly global and can affect a wide range of pressing societal challenges. In this new era, the best scientists should draw insights from across numerous different disciplines, be able to apply new techniques, and possess a broad world-view informed by the intersections between science and the rest of society.

**The Program Structure**

The Schmidt Science Fellows program will feature a series of immersive academic sessions at leading universities in the United States and the United Kingdom, augmenting an 11-month or longer postdoctoral research study.

**Postdoctoral Research**

The Fellows will receive a stipend of $100,000 as part of the Program. This will include conducting a full-time, 11-month or longer postdoctoral research study in a field-leading laboratory, focusing on a discipline in the natural sciences, engineering, mathematics or computing that is different from their existing area of expertise and planned future focus. Our goal is to introduce the Fellows to the ideas, practices, methods, and cultures of other scientific disciplines, broadening their scope of experience. In addition to pursuing the traditional career arc that has aspiring scientists delve deeper and deeper into their field of expertise immediately following their PhD, these individuals can benefit from first obtaining a broader view of the world. Schmidt Science Fellows will have that opportunity, working in a new lab and a new field that will help them form a diverse perspective on the questions and techniques that will position them to make breakthrough discoveries and drive societal change.

The Fellows will select their postdoctoral research laboratory, with assistance from the Schmidt Science Fellows program, the Rhodes Trust, respected researchers, and a number of leading universities. We will help Fellows identify leading laboratories at elite institutions that conduct exciting new research and provide the opportunity to “pivot” from their current area of expertise during the fellowship year. In all cases, Fellows should expect to have a substantial impact on their labs and participate in publishable research during the postdoctoral year.

The Program will also assist Fellows that want to continue work in their postdoctoral area of study following the completion of the fellowship, or in instances where the initial postdoctoral period should extend for longer than the initial 11-month period of time.

**Global Meeting Series**

The first year of the Schmidt Science Fellows program will feature four global meetings at the world’s leading academic institutions, interspersed across the duration of the fellowship. Each meeting will have a specific theme and focus, designed to expand the scope of experience and skill sets of the Fellows, and augment their postdoctoral research work.

**The Rhodes Trust**

**Their mission is to identify and develop leaders to achieve public good. This is what the Rhodes Scholarships have done, with remarkable success, since their inception in 1903.**

The Rhodes Trust, based at Rhodes house in Oxford, UK, is a global foundation with a history selecting and developing young leaders and lifelong fellowship. Rhodes Scholars, selected from over 60 countries worldwide, to study in Oxford for 2 or more years during which time they are actively supported by a lifelong fellowship of likeminded current Scholars and alumni.

As well providing Scholarships, Rhodes Trust also bring together deeply engaged individuals from around the world, across all fields of expertise and at all stages of their careers. They provide physical and virtual hubs so that these individuals can work together - across disciplines and borders - to stand up for the world. By holding events in Oxford and around the globe, the Rhodes Trust create opportunities for the exchange of opinions and ideas. Having the space and freedom to openly debate, discuss, question and challenge is crucial to finding solutions for society’s biggest questions.

The vibrant community of dialogue and fellowship on the online Rhodes Scholar Network runs in parallel to the physical convening of Rhodes Scholars to problem solve in topical areas from breakthroughs in bio-medicine to building the modern research university in the emerging world.

The weight of the Scholarships has moved from an award for individual achievement to a genuine lifelong fellowship of those committed to addressing the world’s most pressing problems. The 5,000 living Rhodes Scholars are connected electronically and engage in online discussion groups and campaigns. Many meet up regularly in their home countries and many work or serve together. Their common bonds and fellowship are remarkable.

**Schmidt Futures**

Schmidt Futures works to advance society through technology, secure breakthroughs in scientific knowledge, and promote shared prosperity.

As a venture facility for public benefit, we drive discovery through investment in people, platforms and partnerships. We aim to nurture the best ideas and most promising leaders from across disciplines. Founded by Alphabet executive chairman Eric Schmidt, we are committed to serving society in new ways with working methods that are modern, fast, lean, and professional.

**"This is an unprecedented era of scientific progress, when artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology and other breakthroughs can dramatically advance fields as disparate as civil engineering, biochemistry and computer science. To address society’s most pressing issues, our best scientists and technologists in all disciplines will need to work effectively with non-profits, government, and business. This program will help our Fellows develop skills that accelerate the pace of research and discovery in their future work, and to serve as the next generation of scientific leaders.”**

*Eric Schmidt*

1. **The Role**

The Program Director is responsible for the design, planning and implementation of the Schmidt Science Fellows program content, as well as being accountable for the operational, and fiscal elements of the program.

**Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities**

The Program Director will:

* In consultation with the Program Joint Committee and any other executive leadership of the program, drive the overall strategic direction of the program, including ensuring that all programmatic elements are in service of the overall vision of promoting interdisciplinary science and future leadership in the sciences.
* Lead and manage all aspects of the program, including design, planning, monitoring and implementation, and more broadly in advocating the vision and concept of the program, in consultation with the Program Joint Committee and any other executive leadership of the program;
* Work in partnership with the representatives on the Program Joint Committee from Schmidt Futures and the Rhodes Trust, ensuring strong communication and stakeholder management;
* Provide direction for the Program Joint Committee, setting the agenda for meetings and working closely with Schmidt and Rhodes colleagues;
* Develop and lead a high-quality team that efficiently and effectively utilizes resources to ensure the program is carried out in a manner consistent with its founding vision;
* Act in a hands-on fashion, driving execution of key program elements such as the Fellows selection process and the curriculum delivery;
* With the support of the Program Joint Committee and any other executive leadership of the program, be able to galvanize universities and relevant institutions (including 50+ nominating/placement institutions and 7+ host partners in the initial year), to engage and support the fellowship in building awareness amongst high-potential PhD candidates in STEM disciplines;
* Develop a resource allocation model that drives the strategy of the program and makes efficient use of funds.

**Person Specification**

What qualities and experience are important for a person in this role?

The Program Director will have the ability to think creatively, build innovation and excellence into all aspects of the program, work across a number of disciplines while developing a consistent Fellows framework of activity, and be alert and responsive to emerging issues. They will set the program’s key milestones and align the budget to accomplish this. A sense of innovation, combined with a pragmatic understanding of what it takes to make something work will be essential.

What type of people is the program looking for?

The small team, located in Oxford, will have a global outlook and will operate internationally and representative of the variety of backgrounds of the Fellows.

Individuals will need to be highly collaborative, have a ‘start-up’ mentality and be risk-positive. Strong teamwork and adaptability to numerous different and overlapping tasks will be especially important, as the day to day responsibilities are likely to be fluid in the early years.

What skills is the program looking for?

The team should have the skills and characteristics required to successfully deliver and grow a new international post-doc academic program in science, technology, engineering, and computing.

Senior team members’ experience to date will be important in order to attract the respect of applicants and other stakeholders. The team will need leadership, academic program content, project management, communications, technology, and logistics skillsets between them.

The Program Director will possess the following skills and experience:

* Significant STEM credentials
* Designing, planning, delivering, monitoring, and evaluating educational or executive development programs of exceptional quality
* Excellent program and project management skills, including experience driving organizations in the public, private, academic and/or philanthropic sectors
* Influencing and engaging at all levels, and a track record of building relationships with academic institutions, premium-brand organisations and powerful individuals
* Working on an international scale and with international stakeholders
* Overseeing large budgets
1. **How to apply**

Enquiries about the role should be made to Alasdair Maclay, Director of Strategy and Development at the Rhodes Trust and member of the Schmidt Science Fellows Joint Committee. Alasdair is contactable on +44 1865 270 956 and at alasdair.maclay@rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk.

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